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13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words)
In collaboration with Bell Laboratories, we developed a model for the ATI photoelectron spectra of argon using 200 fs pulses of UV (308nm), radiation. These spectra provide the first identification of ATI from levels which are Stark shifted by values significantly different from the free-electron ponderomotive shifts. Using this model, we were able to show the consistency of the photoelectron spectra with spectra obtained elsewhere which indicated substantial residual population of excited states following ATI ionization. We also investigated the ATI of N2 and were the first group to understand this process in detail in a diatomic molecule. At the Univ of Maryland, our work on the first ever channeling of intense laser pulses, demonstrated in the late 1993, continued with the discovery that the intense light propagates as waveguide modes (i.e., we actually observe electromagnetic propagation eigenmodes) at intensities more than 10⁸ times beyond the destruction limit of a regular silica-based optical fibre. That is, we demonstrated control the dynamically evolving waveguide to provide single mode (near-Gaussian) or multi-mode propagation. We also showed that the guide mode structure is

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Final Technical Report

AFOSR grant F49620-92-J-0059, *Intense XUV and X-ray Radiation Sources*

For the grant period ending December 31, 1995

In collaboration with Bell Laboratories, we developed a model for the ATI photoelectron spectra of argon using 200 fs pulses of UV (308nm), radiation. These spectra provide the first identification of ATI from levels which are Stark shifted by values significantly different from the free-electron ponderomotive shifts. Using this model, we were able to show the consistency of the photoelectron spectra with spectra obtained elsewhere which indicated substantial residual population in excited states following ATI ionization. We also investigated the ATI of N_2 and were the first group to understand this process in detail in a diatomic molecule.

In parallel, the high-energy (50 mJ) short pulse laser system constructed at AT&T Bell Laboratories was used in an attempt to achieve extremely short wavelength lasing along the ideas introduced in 1967 by Duguay, ie. X-ray pumping of sodium vapor to produce a transient inversion. Preliminary observations of VUV lasing were made in Xe and the postdoctoral associate at the time, David Douglas, assembled the apparatus for studies of sodium. In preparation for injection of an x-ray inverted medium with high order harmonics, his postdoctoral replacement, Dan Mittleman, investigated harmonic generation in the tight focusing limit in backfilled chambers. These studies were the first to experimentally show the effect of atomic structure on the phase matching of high order harmonics.

At the University of Maryland, our work on the first ever channeling of intense laser pulses, demonstrated in late 1993, continued with the discovery that the intense light propagates as waveguide modes (ie. we actually observe electromagnetic propagation eigenmodes) at intensities more than 10^8 times beyond the destruction limit of a regular silica-based optical fibre. That is, we demonstrated control the dynamically evolving waveguide to provide single mode (near-Gaussian) or multi-mode propagation. We also showed that the guide mode structure is independent of the wavelength of light propagating in it. This is a special property of a plasma waveguide. These properties are greatly fortuitous for the phase matching of highly nonperturbative nonlinear optical processes, and producing an extremely short wavelength fibre laser (ie. which doesn't need end mirrors since the waveguide determines the transverse mode structure). These experiments are currently taking place in our original lab. Our experiments have generated worldwide interest, and were most recently described in the Washington Post in September 1995.

In a new laboratory across the hall, we are nearing completion of a Ti:Sapphire laser system which will be capable of producing ultrahigh intensities (up to 3×10^{18} W/cm²). At 10^{18} W/cm², the electron quiver velocity is relativistic. At present, the oscillator is operating with pulsewidths 30×10^{-15} sec (or 30 fs), and we have amplified through the first

two stages of amplification to $\sim 50 \text{ mJ}$ (currently giving intensities of almost 10^{18} W/cm^2 , 1000 times higher than possible in our original lab). Using this new laser, we plan to construct a 1 GeV/cm electron accelerator using the waveguiding properties of our plasma channels. This will be a milestone in accelerator science.

Patent

A High Intensity Optical through X-ray Waveguide and its Applications, U.S. Patent 5,394,411, issued 28 February 1995. (H.M. Milchberg and C.G. Durfee)

1995 Publications - University of Maryland

Development of a Plasma Waveguide for High Intensity Laser Pulses

C.G. Durfee III, J. Lynch, and H.M. Milchberg
Phys. Rev. E **51**, 2368 (1995).

Application of a Plasma Waveguide to Soft X-ray Lasers

H.M. Milchberg, C.G. Durfee III, and J. Lynch
J. Opt. Soc. Am. B **12**, 731 (1995).

Mode Control in a two-pulse excited plasma waveguide

C.G. Durfee III, T. R. Clark, and H.M. Milchberg
J. Opt. Soc. Am. B **13**, 59 (1996).

High Order Frequency Conversion in the Plasma Waveguide

H.M. Milchberg, C.G. Durfee III, and T.J. McIlrath
Phys. Rev. Lett. **75**, 2494 (1995).

Mode-selective coupling to the plasma waveguide

C.G. Durfee III, T. R. Clark, and H.M. Milchberg
submitted to Phys. Rev. Lett., July 1995

Invited Talks

1. *Optical Guiding of Ultra-intense Laser Pulses*

Physics Colloquium, American University, Washington, DC, Feb. 23, 1995 (1 hr.)

2. *Development and Applications of a plasma waveguide for high intensity laser pulses*

Applied Physics colloquium, Columbia University, New York, NY, April 14, 1995 (1 hr.)

3. *Development and Applications of a plasma waveguide for high intensity laser pulses*

Electrical engineering seminar, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor MI, April 27, 1995 (1 hr.)

4. *Channel Guided Lasers for Plasma Accelerators*

Particle Accelerator Conference PAC '95, Dallas TX, May 3, 1995. (30 min.)

5. *Applications of a plasma waveguide for intense laser pulses*

Canadian Association of Physicists 50 Anniversary Congress, Quebec City, 14 June, 1995 (30 min.)

6. *Soft X-ray Fibre Laser*

SPIE meeting on "Soft X-ray lasers and applications, San Diego, CA, 11 July 1995 (30 min.)

7. *Development and applications of a plasma waveguide for high intensity laser pulses*

Euroconference on "Generation and Application of Ultrashort X-ray pulses, Pisa, Italy, Sept. 22, 1995 (1 hr.)

8. *High intensity optical and X-ray pulse propagation in plasma waveguides*

American Physical Society Division of Plasma Physics meeting, Louisville, KY, Nov. 1995 (30 min.)